



Tahoe
Daily
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AHOE NEWS

Friday-Sunday

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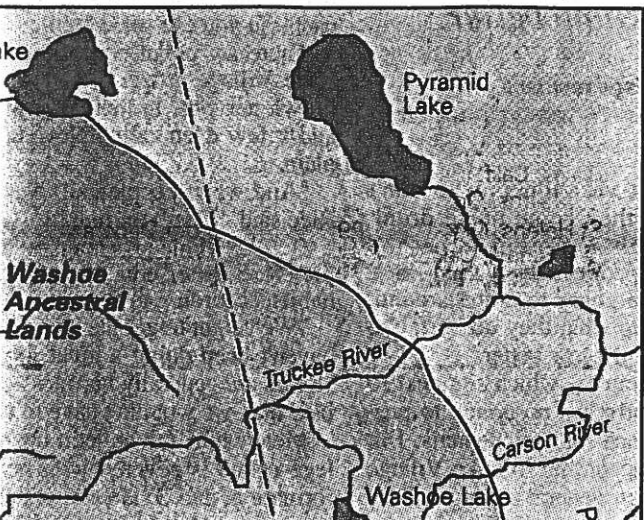
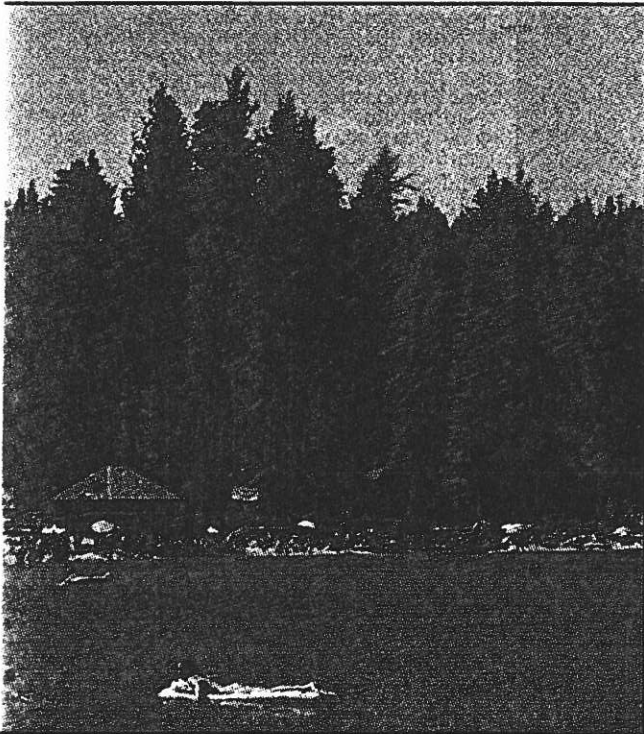
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K E N D



Deliverables: Pipeline or pipe dream?

By Andy Bouelle
Tribune Staff Writer

MTBE isn't the only big problem facing South Tahoe Public Utility District.

The other major problem STPUD seems to be having is getting the presidential deliverables delivered.

"It bodes very poorly for any trust this community can put into the federal government," said Duane Wallace, STPUD board member and executive director of the South Lake Tahoe Chamber of Commerce.

STPUD has spent the past few years working to replace its wastewater export pipeline, which carries 1.7 billion gallons of recycled water 26 miles to Alpine County.

In 1996, the total cost of the project was estimated at \$37.1 million, to be completed in phases. STPUD is completing Phase 2 now and so far has spent \$21 million.

According to STPUD, the district went forward with Phase 2, expecting to receive \$7.1 million

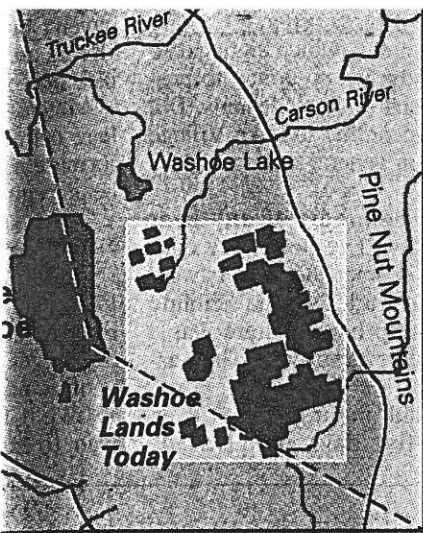
"They need to step up to the plate and deliver what they promised. We have enough problems fighting MTBE."

— Duane Wallace
STPUD board member

great deal of money before that."

Although President Clinton, Nevada Sen. Harry Reid, California Sens. Barbara Boxer and Diane Feinstein and California Congressman John Doolittle want the money to go to STPUD, Wallace said, the bureaucratic process at the EPA has stopped the money.

"For the (Environmental



Chris Morris/Tahoe Tribune

process, and may become available to the Washoe Tribe. Wetlands and stream zones around Taylor Creek, Baldwin Beach and Cascade Creek will become available for Washoe

See **Da ow a ga**, Page 2A

million, to be completed in phases. STPUD is completing Phase 2 now and so far has spent \$21 million.

According to STPUD, the district went forward with Phase 2, expecting to receive \$7.1 million from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

That's what the president promised anyway. "When the president came out to the summit, the very first thing he said was, 'I want this pipeline; I am committed to this pipeline,'" Wallace said.

Because of that, Wallace said, STPUD borrowed \$5 million to go ahead with Phase 2. The money STPUD has already spent, Wallace said, was to be counted as discretionary funds and used for STPUD's financial match to the \$7.1 million grant.

Now, the EPA is not honoring that promise, according to STPUD.

"They only want to go back to Oct. 1, 1997," Wallace said. "We, in good faith, had already spent a

California Congressman John Doolittle want the money to go to STPUD, Wallace said, the bureaucratic process at the EPA has stopped the money.

"For the (Environmental Improvement Program), it bodes very poorly for Tahoe to even receive federal money," he said. "If we can have this kind of horsepower behind the \$7 million and have this small-time, never-been-to-Tahoe bureaucrat hold it up, it doesn't look good for the rest of the money."

The original pipeline was installed in the 1960s, under state mandate to pump wastewater out of the basin. The pipeline travels 26 miles to the Harvey Place Reservoir in Alpine County, where the recycled water irrigates 2,000 acres of STPUD land and 2,600 acres of ranch land.

Traveling underground, the pipe carries 4-1/2 million gallons of recycled water a day along

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Stateline bear trap draws ire

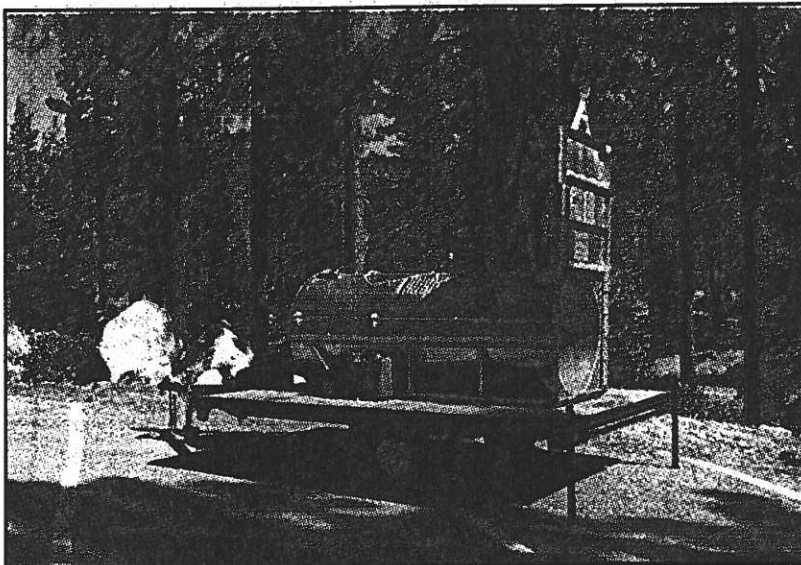
By Rick Chandler
Tribune Staff Writer

There's more trouble "bruin" in Lake Tahoe, as Nevada wildlife officials attempt to match wits with local black bears in the Kingsbury area of Stateline.

Is the Nevada Division of Wildlife smarter than the average bear? So far, the answer is no. The state delivered a bear trap to the Lake Village Condominium Complex in Stateline last Friday, in an attempt to capture four bears which have been raiding garbage cans.

But the only thing the state of Nevada has caught with the trap so far is grief, as area residents have again raised their voices in protest to protect their bears.

"These bears are just going through the trash; they're not hurting anything," said Chris, a Lake Village resident who didn't want his last name used. "It's a mom bear and



Jim Grant/Tahoe Tribune

In an attempt to capture a family of bears, the Nevada Division of Wildlife set a bear trap last week at Lake Village.

three cubs, and I see them around all the time. If they trap these bears, odds are they're going to kill them. I know some people who live around here have been springing the trap at night so no bears get caught."

Bear management has become a hot-button issue in the Tahoe Basin ever since two bears were destroyed in the Homewood area a week ago. In that incident, a vacation resident reported the bears damaging his property, and California Fish and Game officials came out and

trapped a mother bear and her cub, later destroying them.

But bear management policy is a little different in Nevada. If the bears in Lake Village are captured they will be relocated, according to Nevada Division of Wildlife spokesman Dave Rice.

"Usually we try to use a hazing technique, where we attempt to scare the bear into not returning," Rice said. "We relocate the bear a few miles away, then use pepper

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Wildlife delivered it.

"I wanted to be sure the bears wouldn't be harmed," he said.

Neumeyer also said that the Homewood incident prompted him to begin pricing bear-proof trash containers for Lakewood residents.

"We hope to begin installing them by next spring," he said. "At first we'll put them in the area bears most frequently are seen. But we have 326 trash receptacles (in the complex), and the bear-proof containers are going for about \$350 each. So you can see what I'm facing."

There are about eight bears who frequent the Lake Village property, and some residents have grown nervous. In fact, several called Neumeyer and a few even called Nevada Wildlife to complain.

"And when people call, we have to respond," Rice said. "That's our job."

But the whole problem could be solved if people were better educated about bears and their habits, according to Rice.

"We've got to get the word out, and frankly we haven't been doing a great job of that," he said. "Bears are generally harmless, and if people realized that, we wouldn't have to trap them."

Meanwhile, the bulletin board at the Lake Village office is covered with bear notices and information, and condo owners are informed about bears regularly in the association newsletter.

"But some people don't read, I guess," Neumeyer said.

Adding to the problem is the fact that the bear trap is located only just up the hill from Kingsbury Middle School, where curious youngsters might get more than they bargained for if they venture near it.

"We'll look into that," Rice said. "We don't want to catch anything but bears."

Pipe

Continued from Page 1A

Highways 50 and 89, going over Luther Pass. The parts of the pipeline most in need of work were replaced in the first two phases.

However, because of STPUD's inability to get the money, the 1999 phase may have to be canceled.

"We need to know by Nov. 1 if that money is coming so we can do engineering and planning for the next phase," Wallace said. "That is the drop-dead date."

Congress has appropriated another \$2.5 million for the 1999 phase. However, STPUD Information Officer Dawn Forsythe said that money will be lost if STPUD doesn't receive the original \$7.1 million and is forced to cancel work.

Legislators supporting the money are helping STPUD fight for the \$7.1 million and South Lake Tahoe's fight for the rest of the federal \$50 million Clinton promised.

"We applauded the president as he announced an ambitious Tahoe initiative that included \$50 million over two years for land acquisition,

prescribed burning, watershed restoration, public transportation, upgrades to the wastewater pipelines, erosion control and scientific research at the lake," Feinstein said on the Senate floor in September. "Unfortunately, since then, Lake Tahoe seems to have dropped off the administration's radar screen. The administration never even fulfilled the \$50 million in commitments the president made at Tahoe, let alone extend those commitments to fiscal year 1999."

Boxer sent a letter to EPA dated Aug. 28 saying, "As you know, the Presidential Summit at Lake Tahoe on July 26, 1997, President Clinton pledged to commit \$50 million in federal funding to help protect the lake. A centerpiece of that administration funding commitment is the export pipeline replacement project."

Wallace said STPUD staff and board members are furious. "I am not going to put the rate-payers in jeopardy. I am not going to let the government trick us into spending money and then re-spending money. They need to step up to the plate and deliver what they promised. We have enough problems fighting MTBE."

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tion, the Tahoe Regional Planning
Agency and many others — com-
mitted to preserving the lake's clari-
ty.

"We value every opportunity we
get to project our traditional values
in any discussion related to the en-
vironment," Wallace said. "We
have the ability to bring a lot to the
basin. A more powerful part of it is
the knowledge we can provide an-
cestral knowledge we've had from
the beginning of time, from our per-
spective. From our first day."

Wallace said, while Lake Tahoe
may be very important to many
people, it is most important to the
Washoe Tribe.

"Some people have said we were
born to die for the lake. That's how
strong we feel about Lake Tahoe,"
Wallace said. "It's central to the
Washoe religion — Lake Tahoe."